

Deserving young men who desire to study for the ministry are sought out, and means provided for their support during their studies, with the best results. The system is so thoroughly understood here that they are astonished how we get on without it. There are, no doubt, aspects of this system which we should not like at home; but so far as I can learn they have not been attended with bad results here. And the idea is beyond doubt a good one, that there should be a Board in our Church chiefly composed of intelligent laymen, whose business it should be to take an interest in theological students and probationers, and to provide means in many cases for forwarding their advancement. This would probably be the best solution of our student difficulties.

But I must draw these rapid notes meantime to a close with an earnest recommendation that we should every year if possible—in any case, once in two years—send a deputation to the General Assembly of the American Presbyterian Church. This also, so far as the provision of means is concerned, should be the work of our wealthy laymen. There should be no difficulty whatever about this; and the results of a larger intercourse between our Church and the Churches here would be of the happiest kind. Every one acknowledges the good which was done by the visit of Dr. Milligan and Dr. Lang two years ago. I have found nothing but the warmest feeling of regard for the old Church of Scotland. It is admitted that for many years after the Disruption evil rumours prevailed about it. It was thought by some to be little more than a moribund institution. But the deputations which have gone over from this side have looked at *facts* for themselves, and the consequence has been a great reaction of interest in the Established Church. It is true that all the Churches are voluntary here, but they have no feelings of hostility to a State Church as such. It simply does not suit them. It never was possible in the circumstances of America. But the Americans have no quarrel with National Churches as they exist in the old countries of Europe. And to find our own Church doing so much good as it is, and full of so much intellectual and Christian life, has been

the most sincere gratification to all enlightened Presbyterians here. They crave for more intercourse with us. They have difficulty in looking upon the Free Church, the United Presbyterian, and ourselves, as anything but different branches of the same Church; and they embrace us all equally in their affection. Our differences are nothing to them. It is to be hoped, therefore, that we will do more in the future than we have hitherto done to cultivate them. They may learn something from us. We may learn a good deal from them, especially in congregational organization and in the art of calling forth and directing the Christian liberality of our people—perhaps even in preaching. They have certainly great aptitude in making their sermons interesting and stimulating. Men not otherwise gifted have the gift of making the pulpit week by week something of a *power*. With our quieter habits, we may undervalue them, and talk of American *bunkum* in the pulpit and elsewhere. But after all, the object of men's speaking at all in the pulpit, senate, or lecture-room, is that they may each interest and exert influence by what they say; and it is difficult to understand how the preaching even of the most excellent men can do good when it fails to arouse attention and create effect. The American pulpit is generally effective. It is a real power, and one of the most healthy powers in American society; and this simply because it is living, and in constant *rapport* with the teeming ideas which circulate in that society. The Gospel is to it no mere tradition standing isolated and by itself, but is brought into continual relation to the forms of modern thought, and the necessities of a new, vast, and accumulating civilization. It is easy to imagine how in such circumstances preaching will be often crude, inflated, and extravagant; but after all, perhaps crudeness is better than dullness, and anything better than a dead sound which means nothing and never touches any human heart.

Much in every way, therefore, might be learned by deputations of our younger clergy visiting this country. Let them come mainly to learn, and not themselves—in the first instance, at least—to lecture or preach. When they have seen